

WILLIAM MCCLURE.

MAY 7, 1884.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House and ordered to be printed.

Mr. CULLEN, from the Committee on Invalid Pensions, submit the following

REPORT:

[To accompany bill S. 1910.]

The Committee on Invalid Pensions, to whom was referred the bill (S. 1910) granting a pension to William McClure, having had the same under consideration, respectfully report :

The report of the Committee on Pensions, in the Senate, in the present Congress, sets forth the facts in this case fully and correctly ; which report we adopt as our own, as follows :

William McClure enlisted August 21, 1862, in Company A of the Third Illinois Light Artillery, and was discharged July 3, 1865. He filed an application for a pension April 14, 1879, alleging that about December 15, 1862, at Bolivar, Tenn., he was taken with chronic diarrhea, which lasted him one year; that he was pronounced incurable; and that he was kept upon invalid duty until he was discharged. His claim was rejected because the records of the War Department did not show the existence of chronic diarrhea in the service, and he was unable to furnish parol evidence satisfactory to the Pension Office to establish the origin of his disability in the service.

This is the only defect in the case. McClure's disability has been complete, and he has been a county charge and an inmate of the poor house most of the time since his discharge. His soundness at the time of enlistment is shown by the affidavits of his intimate associates in farm work for several years prior to the war. When he made his application the captain of his company was dead, the first lieutenant could not testify because he had been in hospital during the same period, and the second lieutenant testified that claimant was sick at Bolivar Tenn., at the time alleged, but did not remember positively for what disease he was treated. As the second lieutenant's testimony was not until twenty years after claimant's sickness, its lack of positiveness as to the exact nature of claimant's disease is not surprising.

Dr. W. B. Wilson, a reputable physician of Flora, Ill., testifies that McClure has been disabled by chronic diarrhea since 1868, to his personal knowledge, and that previous to that time McClure was treated for the same complaint by Dr. D. M. Hart, deceased, as Wilson was informed by said Hart. Other testimony has been submitted to show that McClure complained of and was disabled by chronic diarrhea ever since he was in the hospital at Bolivar.

McClure states that he never saw any surgeon with his company, and this statement is sustained by the fact that the Surgeon-General reported that there were no records of McClure's regiment or of Bolivar, Tenn., on file in his office. This fact does not appear to have been considered in the Pension Office in passing upon this case. In 1880 claimant wrote letters to the Pension Office, stating that while he was in the general hospital at Little Rock, Ark., the commandant, Major-General Steele, demanded his return to his regiment, whereupon Dr. Clark, the surgeon in charge, wrote to Surgeon-General Barnes, stating the particulars of McClure's case, and the latter decided him unfit for duty. Soon afterwards Major-General Reynolds succeeded General Steele, and Dr. Lackey succeeded Dr. Clark. General Reynolds made the same demand

for McClure's return to his company; Dr. Lackey wrote to the Surgeon-General, and McClure was again decided to be unfit for duty. He referred to the records of the Surgeon-General's Office to verify these statements, but no effort to find this correspondence appears to have been made.

While medical evidence of McClure's disability in the service is lacking, perhaps through the failure to look up the correspondence referred to, the fact that he became disabled in the service and that his disability has continued to increase ever since his discharge is established to the satisfaction of the committee, and the case is believed to be one that properly calls for favorable action by Congress.

We therefore recommend the passage of the accompanying bill.